

THE SECOND EDITION.

AN
E S S A Y
ON

The evil Consequences attending
INJUDICIOUS BLEEDING
IN
P R E G N A N C Y.

(Price 1s. 6d.)

and Consequences attending

THE DISCLOSURE OF THE

SECRET OF THE
FRENCH REVOLUTION
AND THE
FALL OF THE
BONAPARTE

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AN
E S S A Y
ON THE
EVIL CONSEQUENCES ATTENDING
INJUDICIOUS BLEEDING
IN
P R E G N A N C Y.

WITH AN
ADDRESS IN REPLICATION
TO THE
MONTHLY REVIEWERS.

K
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THE SECOND EDITION.

Medicus finem suum non semper obtinet feliciter, vel quando
machina, quoad partes suas praeipuas prorsus est destructa,
vel quando nulla inter Morbum, et Medicamentum amplius
est proportio. Hoffman de Nat. Medicinæ.

L O N D O N :
Printed for J. MURRAY, No. 32, Fleetstreet.
M,DCC,LXXXI.

(Price 1s. 6d.)



TO THE
MONTHLY REVIEWERS.

MESSIEURS,

HAD the world been influenced by the opinion with which you favoured the following Essay, I should have avoided again troubling the press with a second impression: but as I find the public have, disregarding your comment, thought it worthy their protection, it would be an ill compliment to their candor, not to take some notice of the futility of your remarks:—for it may be demonstratively proved, that as critics
you

you want discernment ; as smatterers in science, modesty and liberality; and hence merit the contempt of your readers ; who, if they attentively examine your labors, will find how inadequate you are to support that consequence which you arrogate to yourselves, especially in the medical department.

THERE is no character to whom the literary world is more obliged than an impartial and well-informed critic—There is no character that deserves more severe reprobation than an ignorant or partial pretender—whether he is devoted to the views of his friends, or employers—or influenced by the envious malevolence, or sordid selfishness of a narrow mind, which makes vanity and interest the idols of its worship.—
To

To which of these classes you belong, I leave it to the following reflections on your criticism to determine.

In your usual dictatorial style thus you deliver yourselves—

“ We are far from understanding with
“ this gentleman, that indiscriminate
“ bleeding in pregnancy is the general
“ practice in this country at present.—
“ We are *certain*, that if the agreement
“ of all the best modern writers and
“ lecturers on this subject have any
“ weight with the public, it cannot.—
“ If any thing is wanting to confirm the
“ dictates of their experience, it must
“ not be expected from the *diffuse* rea-
“ soning in the present work, which is
“ only a prolix commentary on a very
“ simple

“ simple aphorism—viz.—that when
 “ the state of the body is weak, it is
 “ hurtful to weaken it further by the
 “ loss of blood.”——Monthly Review,
 February 1779.

INSTEAD of informing us of *your* understanding relative to the general practice, it would have been more to the purpose if you had considered for whose use these Observations were chiefly intended. They could not be for those who imbibed the same doctrine the Author was willing to inculcate, but for those, who had long pursued, and were still persisting in a practice which experience had convinced him was erroneous.

HAD the Obstetric Art been confined only to the judicious, with those educated

cated under the lecturers of the present times, the work might have been considered as unnecessary—but that is not the case—it is followed by a considerable majority of *Accoucheurs* who have not made the Healing Art properly their study—who have, comparatively speaking, scarce read at all—who have never had the opportunity of attending the modern schools of midwifery, and seldom reason, content with the appearance of knowledge, and satisfied with any nominal cause to which they may attribute the necessity of their practice, and impose upon their patients by plausible pretences. Besides there are no affections which, on a slight survey, seem to ask for the aid of the lancet so immediately as those arising from pregnancy; and where common minds

b

ignorant

ignorant of every physiological principle, are more easily convinced of its rectitude, from imagining they certainly know that the cause from whence these affections are produced, is plenitude ; incapable of discovering the often too fatal delusion.

IF we look into DEVENTER, MAURICEAU, SMELLIE, and others, men who held the first reputation in the art, we shall find bleeding has been universally recommended under the notion of pregnancy rendering all constitutions plethoric.— If we examine most of the modern authors, of contrary opinions, we shall see they have touched the subject slightly, and each of them advanced little more than a bare *ipse dixit*. But this is by no means sufficient—mere opinions

nions are not to be regarded—reasoning is thought requisite—and tho' a man should be ever so experienced, it is a necessary appendage to support his assertions, whatever they are, by rational deductions, flowing, as directly as possible, from the pure fountain of truth.—
BAGLIVI, says—

“ DUO sunt præcipui medicinæ cardines, ratio & observatio.”

“ FALLAX quòq; non rarò experientia,
“ si rationis ductu fuerit destituta.”

HOFFMAN breathes similar sentiments:

“ IN medicinâ duo sunt fulcra ; experientia, quæ prima veritatis parens,
“ & ratio, quæ clavis scientiæ medicæ est.”

AND GAUBIUS, speaking of the advantage of faithful observation, thus expresses himself:—

“ QUÆCUNQUE porro ex observatis ad
 “ congrua demonstrationis principia applicatis, casti ope ratiocinii, legitimè
 “ deducta sunt ; quanquam per se in
 “ sensus non cadunt, non minorem profecto fidem merentur.”

REASONING we find then the handmaid of observation, and even the support of experience—if we pay any regard to the opinions of men, no common ornaments of their profession—and however simple the aphorism, it is expected that the comment should be as *diffuse* as the nature of the subject requires, to afford a full explanation, not rendered weak, and dissatisfactory by its brevity.

IN

IN the present case, had the discussion, by studied conciseness, become in the least imperfect, it would have been thought an unpardonable omission, probably attributed to the ignorance of the writer ;—as the attempt was to reform the obstinate, and inform the unskilful. —It was calculated to shew the miseries which may, and do arise from the abuse, and the benefits which accrue from the proper use of so noble a remedy.

To conquer vulgar errors, which have long been persevered in, and held forth as incontestible facts, with men who cannot, or will not think for themselves, is almost as difficult a task, as to persuade fools to despise the absurdities of superstition; and requires infinite industry,

dustry, especially when they are considered of trivial moment.

UNCONSCIOUS of the fatal consequences which may attend this common operation we allude to, in daily practice, people cannot believe there is any risk in complying with it.

GREAT effects produced by great causes are readily acknowledged—but similar products succeeding apparently slight causes, is a doctrine not so very easily established.—That a cannon ball, from a point blank shot, striking the head of a Monthly Reviewer, may tumble down and destroy the mighty cumb'rous mass, tho' some perhaps may doubt the possibility, yet it will be assented to by the generality of mankind:—but that a
small

small needlepassed up the nose, and penetrating the brain shall procure the same *dreadful* catastrophe demands in proof, for *obvious reasons*, more *diffuse* investigation.

THE circulation of the blood, though great strides had been taken towards its discovery by VESALIUS, and fully completed by the immortal HARVEY, from a variety of experiments, was still warmly and vehemently opposed by many of his contemporaries,—nay, even RIOLANUS, the first anatomist of the age, could not be compelled to acquiesce with him; but held his principles as fallacious.—If truth found its adoption so difficult amongst the studious, whose minds were furnished with every material of experimental knowledge,—is it
not

not natural to conclude the task would be more arduous amongst the pertinacious illiterate ?

FROM all these considerations, therefore, as no publication had appeared appropriated solely to set this subject in its strongest light, it was incumbent on the author to aim at refuting the pernicious theory upon which the practice, he complained of, was founded.—Perspicuity in argument was necessary—the eminence of those characters who had espoused the principle, added to long continued custom, called for the most indisputable proofs to procure a refutation.—It would not have been satisfactory to have recited merely conclusions drawn from observation the result of private practice, however convincing to the practitioner himself—

himself—Error, that dupe of Pride, would still have pursued its wonted path—and Ignorance had no opportunity of instruction—hence arose the necessity of minutely examining the subject.—The prolixity therefore, as you term it, which you think deserving of censure, had you condescended to have been more modest in conveying your opinions, will rather to the intelligent reader, be thought a duty than a fault.

YOUR two first positions do not afford more striking specimens of the weakness of your judgment, than your *simple aphorism* does of your ignorance in medical matters.—You could not have given a more glaring proof of your simplicity, than by the *simple* manner in which you have *simply* stated it.—For

c

there

there are many cases, where, notwithstanding the system is very weak, bleeding cannot be dispensed with ; this, tho' a flat contradiction to your assertion, is too notorious to need insisting on here ; still in pregnancy, few complaints arising from that as a cause abstractedly considered, I might have said not any, need its aid—but constitutions, even in a state of imbecillity, have been butcher'd by it, from false deductions drawn from hypothetical data.

BESIDES, was your assertion literally true, the work is not confined *only* to prove that point ;—but takes a more extensive scale in order to shew, that even those the most hardy, may be reduced to the utmost danger—that effects the most deleterious may be brought on, not to
the

the mother alone, but to the foetus also, by the too liberal, and injudicious use of bleeding.—These you have lost sight of—or never saw—nor is it to be wondered at, since we are so seldom favoured throughout the whole of your performances with the sagacity of the critic joined to the integrity of the man.—It seems enough for your purpose, if you can patch up a few sentences with words not ungrammatically crowded together, and call the incongruous compound a critique,—paying neither regard to the intent of the work, nor examining candidly the force of the arguments;—but as a business you have engaged in, something must be done—you therefore run over what you do not understand, censure what you are unable to judge of, or unwilling to praise—

whilst interest, often, at the expence of judgment, bribes you to approve what you ought to condemn.

OF the extent of your experience respecting our present subject, I cannot form a conjecture, but dare assert, that there are few physicians, particularly in the country, who find not, even at this day, unhappy consequences constantly occurring from that practice *you* pronounce not general enough to warrant a publication on this head;—but if it prevails only with a few, these Observations cannot be useless, as you would wish to infer—and I should be happy to find that the same motives actuated you in your monthly Farrago, that induced the Author to employ his pen in this undertaking.

To

To say more on this occasion would be unnecessary.—Every candid reader will without much trouble discover, how little is to be depended on the labors of men, who dare obtrude on the public, what they style, animadversions on the works of others, ignorantly or intentionally jumbled together to impose upon the credulous—misguide the indolent—bias the uninformed, and raise contributions by pompous impudence, and pedantic ostentation.

How far I am right or wrong in the inferences I have drawn, I must leave to the judgment of others;—and shall, as one proof, refer them to the account of the work following, by the Critical Reviewers, your competitors—who have given their sense of the matter in the subsequent words:—

“ As

“ As the advantage, or detriment of
 “ blood-letting must be entirely rela-
 “ tive to the deficiency or super-abun-
 “ dance of the vital fluid—the effect of
 “ that operation will vary in different
 “ constitutions, and hence it can never
 “ be indiscriminately, and safely used
 “ in all cases for alleviating the com-
 “ plaints of pregnant women—This
 “ principle the Author enforces by phy-
 “ siological arguments, which he places
 “ in a clear light.”—Crit. Review, Jan.
 1779.

FROM what has been advanced above,
 added to the opinion now recited, it will
 appear, I flatter myself, that the mo-
 tives which urged me to publish were
 not reprehensible—the publication use-
 less—or the execution ignorantly con-
 ducted.—That your critique merits
 every

every contempt a generous mind can bestow, as illiberal, trifling, and erroneous—and that in future it will be necessary for you to pursue the advice of HORACE, if you would desire to be read with pleasure, or eat from the product of your pen—

SUMITE materiam vestris, qui scribitis,
æquam

Viribus; & versate diù, quid ferre
recusent,

Quid valeant humeri:——

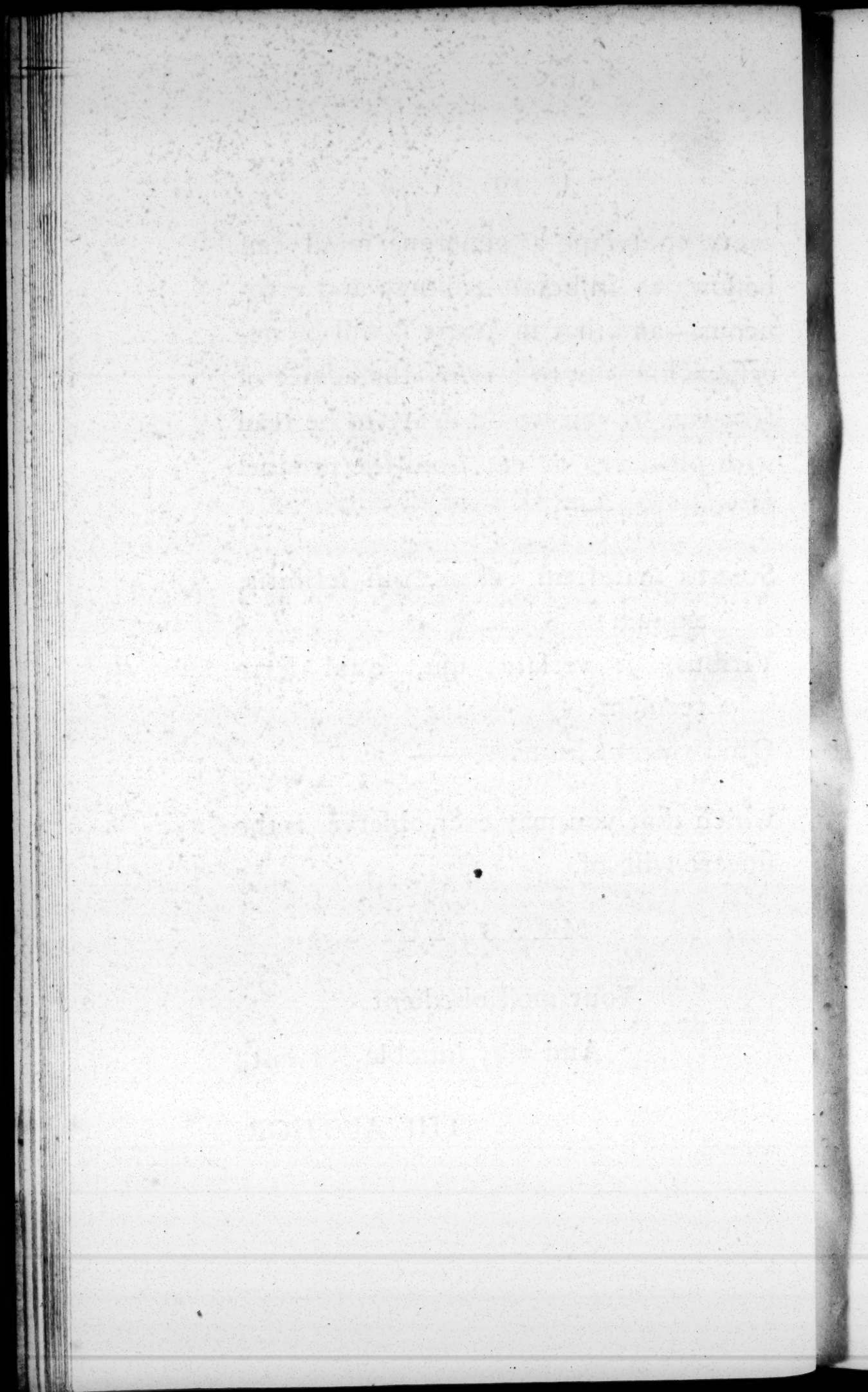
which that you may ever observe, is the sincere wish of,

M E S S I E U R S,

Your most obedient

And very humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.



A N

E S S A Y, &c.

IT is certainly not only the duty of every man who professes himself a Practitioner in any department of the Healing Art, to attempt to cure those maladies with which the human machine is immediately affected, but he should also consider in what manner they are most effectually to be eradicated, with ease to the patient, and safety to the constitution: for it would, in fact, be much more eligible to leave Nature to her own attempts, than bring on other mischiefs more difficult

cult to be conquered, and more fatal in their tendency; which will constantly happen without strict attention to these considerations. Nor should he, who practises on any other principles, be held in higher estimation than a mere Quack, who, regardless of every feeling of humanity, every duty due to Society, makes interest alone the object of his attention, and endangers the health of thousands by administering some nostrum, generally violent and deleterious in its effects, and always hazardous in its consequences.

THE materials of which their Arcana are compounded, may not, perhaps, merit censure so much as the wrong application; for the best and noblest medicine, may become the most dangerous

gerous in the hands of Ignorance :—
Hence a foundation of misery is often
laid by the presumptuous effrontery
of these pretenders ; who, careless
about the calamities they occasion,
incapable of thinking how they may
best relieve, study only how they may
best impose upon, their fellow-creatures
with *secrecy* and impunity.

UNIVERSAL Remedies are perpetually
foisted upon the Public, pushed for-
ward by every artifice fallacy can in-
vent, by the recital of cases which ne-
ver did exist, and cures which never
were performed. Nor should we won-
der that the ignorant and credulous
are imposed upon by such public and
bold assertions, when we see men of
respectable characters, and of approv-
ed knowledge in some departments of

science, though they scarce know the name of any distemper, signing pompous advertisements, to gain them credibility, of the most *amazing* cures of different disorders, performed by some *infallible* nostrum.—Ill-placed humanity! would it not be better for these industrious advocates to rest in silence? then might they escape censure, by not encouraging those more than impudent impostors in laughing at the absurdity of mankind, and defrauding the too easily deluded Million.

NOR can they steer totally clear of the imputation, who, though they pretend not to be possessed of any Panacea, still have *particular* remedies for *particular* complaints, infallible in their operation, however different the cause; and so happily adapted to every
con-

constitution, that though the robust can bear them, the most delicate shall not be hurt by them; or though the latter, from the mildness of their operation, will not feel the least inconvenience, still the former shall receive every benefit their most sanguine hopes can expect.

THESE assertions, absurd as fallacious, deserve the severest reprehension, and merit the contempt of every man who feels for the miseries of mankind, and studiously labors for their alleviation.

FOR we know that many medicines with which the *Materia Medica* is enriched, by the sagacity and unwearied application of men of science, are possessed of powers calculated to eradicate
particular

p rticular complaints, as has been proved by a series of time, and repeated experiments ; *still these* require different management in different constitutions ; nay even some alterations are found necessary in the same constitution at different periods, in order that they may properly exert those virtues with which they are replete ; not harrafs or destroy any part of the machine, so that the nervous or vascular system may be debilitated, Nature rendered unable to perform her salutary and accustomed efforts ; and, in fine, so disturb the regular order of the animal economy, that, though the original cause of the present malady may be conquered, still the effects of that cure (if such it may be called) constitute a new train of *powerful*, dangerous, and deadly diseases.

THE

THE *lues venerea* is universally allowed to yield to mercury, and its preparations; and, indeed, so certain is its effect, that Dr. Cullen says, he never saw one case where it was not *crowned* with success:—this fact I know has been denied by some; and I have seen patients, who, after having taken an enormous quantity, have not been *in the least* nearer the completion of the cure than when they at first started; though by prudent management, in other more skilful hands, they have been happily relieved, and the complaint totally subdued, though still mercury was under a necessity of being adhered to in some particular form and mode, adapted to the exigencies of the case, and nature of the constitution. It is certain, therefore, from hence, there is no one form which will
suit

suit every patient, for many require not only different preparations, but different modes of exhibition, else the *virus* will not be corrected, or carried out of the habit so soon as it ought, by which means large quantities of this very active medicine are poured into the constitution; and though the *virus*, we will grant, should at last be conquered, chronic weakness, consumptions, palsies, &c. are very often the consequence.

THERE is not a smatterer in medicine who does not know the bark will cure an intermittent fever; but from its misapplication, how easily may it be converted into a continued one?

THE Duke of Portland's Powder, as it is called, for it was known to the
Ancients,

Ancients, has prevented the return of a fit of the gout; hence got into high estimation as a radical cure for that torturing malady—but it has been transmitted to us, from undoubted authority, that those, who imagined themselves fortunate in their cure, fell, in a short time after, unhappy sacrifices to its noxious operation. Many other instances might be introduced of a similar nature; but what have been here recited will sufficiently prove,—That, in the exhibition of medicine, the strictest attention ought to be paid to the constitution, in order to ascertain, as clearly as possible, whether or not it is in a proper situation to receive benefit from particular applications—and also,—whether it can bear their operation, so that it may again recover its pristine vigor,

C

or,

or, as near that state, as the violence of the disease, or the necessarily demanded activity of the remedies will permit.

If then this precaution is absolutely requisite, as certain it is, inasmuch as the success of the medicines given depend on it in a great measure, as well as the stability of the recovery, and future welfare of the patient, in complaints, which originate *ab extra*, and from morbid *miasmata* which may be thrown out of the constitution,—How much more is it necessary in those distresses which arise from a cause ordained by Divine Providence for the best and noblest purpose; which must have its stated residence in the human body, and happens in its most salutary state, yet still brings on generally a train of disagreeable

agreeable symptoms, very often encreasing to that excess so as to endanger the future health of the oppressed ; and, without the closest attention, and judicious treatment, may destroy the intent of Supreme Dispensation ?—I mean—PREGNANCY.

THE too strong exertion of natural effects here constitutes the complaints, and the symptoms arising from thence very often call for the aid of the physician, so that the patient may be conducted safely to the time of labor—the constitution preserved in such a state, that Nature may, *in tempore parturiendi*, be neither too powerful, nor too defective,—and so disposed, that the recovery may be pleasant, quick, and permanent.

VARIOUS are the methods necessary to promote these desirable intentions, which depend chiefly in adapting our remedies to the particular constitution we have to deal with; and notwithstanding too little care is taken, in general, of women during pregnancy, yet, I am firmly persuaded, no part of the practice of the *obstetric* art is more necessary to their attainment, than a judicious treatment before the time of labor.

IT is a matter not sufficiently attended to, and, indeed, most of those, who have wrote professedly on the Practice of Midwifery, have taken too little pains with this, bestowing almost all their labor on the operative part. Their directions have been delivered too generally, and hurried over too

cur-

cursorily; so that one would be almost led to believe they thought the first stage of pregnancy of no moment: or, that errors committed in that period, could not be conducive to any evils which arise afterwards.

THIS inattention amongst men of abilities we have great reason to lament, when we consider the number of the unskilful, and obstinate which practice this art;—their mode of education;—the small share of physical knowledge most of them are possessed of;—the particular conceit attending ignorance, and its aptitude to catch at any notion which can supply it with the appearance of understanding, or exculpate it from the flagrancy of error. Nor should we be surprised to find, that the practice of many, though
not

not always attended with the most fatal consequences, yet very often is accompanied with danger which might have been avoided ; protracted recovery, and a variety of complaints which should have been prevented.

FROM these considerations alone it will not seem strange, that a species of quackery should even, in the present case, be prevalent ; and, indeed, in many parts of the country, almost universal. Nay, so prejudiced are numbers in favor of the practice, that the neglect of it is sufficient, *in vulgar minds*, almost totally to destroy the reputation of the most sagacious and experienced.

So powerful is error, once established by custom, that it requires
both

both courage, assiduity, and abilities to destroy its influence even in common things, easily comprehensible to the lowest capacities; much more so in matters which are more complex, and require both knowledge, industry, and observation in the investigation, which ever is the case in medical enquiries.

ADD to this, men, either from indolence or pride, are difficultly persuaded to relinquish principles once adopted; and theories built from them become Hobby-horses of such easy and pleasant motion, that they ride without reins, and fly in the face of Nature and Common Sense, with all the violence of purblind Bigotry.

WAS

Was not this the case, could it, at this day, have been the practice to *bleed in general* during Pregnancy, and that repeatedly in *every* constitution? —Certainly not. To shew, therefore, the inconsistency and danger of this practice, is the business of the following sheets ; at least to offer such reasons as are consistent with the opinions of men, whose names do the highest honor to the profession ; and which, from practical observation, I am warranted to advance.

THOUGH Bleeding in pregnant women is very often highly prejudicial, I would not from thence be thought to infer it is never useful ; on the contrary, I look upon it, in some cases, so highly beneficial, and so absolutely necessary, that the omission would be
productive

productive of the most immediate and imminent danger: it is the abuse I only inveigh against, and would wish every effort to be exerted, in order to abolish so destructive an enemy to mankind.

CELSUS, though apparently a favourer of this application, speaking of Bleeding at different times of life, and under different circumstances, includes gravid women in the account; yet, at the time he overturns the opinions of the ancient physicians, prescribes particular bounds to its use:

“ ANTIQUI sibi perfuaferant, mulierem gravidam, quæ ita curata esset, abortum esse facturam.”—

yet afterwards remarks; “ Postea vero usus ostendit nihil ex his esse perpetuum,” and subjoins this rule:—

D

“ Interest

“ Interest enim, non quæ sit ætas, nec
 “ quid in corpore intus gerantur, sed
 “ quæ vires.”---For this obvious reason;
 “ Mulieri prægnanti post curationem
 “ quoque viribus opus est, non tan-
 “ tum ad se, sed etiam ad partum sus-
 “ tinendum *.”

WHAT is here advanced by CELSUS,
 though speaking of the cure of women
 with child, afflicted with some disease
 independent of gravidity, still is truly
 applicable to our present subject. Nor
 should his advice, who so indefatigably
 scrutinized the works of that parent of
 medicine, HIPPOCRATES, and other an-
 cient physicians, cautiously selected their
 excellencies, and corrected their er-
 rors from observation, *the best and least*

* Cap. de Sang. Detr. per venas.

fallacious

fallacious preceptor, be overthrown by any blind, and unprofitable theory. But so fond are mankind of novelty, if they can only cover their chimerical principles with any plausible pretext, they would rather labor to support the fallacy, than be humble followers of wholesome doctrine, better pleased with the laurel of ingenuity, than ingenuoufness,

IN opposition to an opinion from so good authority, founded on medical knowledge, and nice observation, it may not be thought foreign to our subject to enquire, how this error has crept so universally into practice,

IN the progressive improvement of the medical art, men found it necessary to be acquainted with the operations

tions of Nature, her mode of producing certain effects, that they might be more capable of obviating any difficulty arising from her defects, and accounting minutely for every action accomplished by her efforts.—Hence arose different theories, built upon the chimerical DATA of different schools from whence they received their PRINCIPIA; till the time of the immortal HARVEY, that great luminary of physical learning: his discovery of the circulation of the blood opened a large field, and promised greater certainty to their reasoning.

THE laws of mechanics, and doctrine of fluids, universally were thence thought necessary to be understood minutely, and applied to account for a variety of phænomena in the human machine,

machine, particularly the menstrual flux; which was believed to arise from a general *plethora* in the constitution. As a proof of which, the time of its first appearance, its periodical return, and necessary use, such a contrivance seemed elegantly calculated to produce, were urged:—add to this, the situation of the *uterus* contributed not a little to favour and support this opinion.

No wonder this doctrine generally prevailed, when a man of distinguished abilities, Dr. FRIEND, took such pains to support it, and formed his deductions agreeable to the dogmata of the then medical seminaries.—If, then, a *plethora* was held as the cause of the CATAMENIA, every sudden obstruction of them must be supposed to overload the
con-

constitution; more particularly as the quantity of blood, calculated by that gentleman to be evacuated at every periodical menstruation, was twenty-four ounces, or thereabouts. The symptoms arising from pregnancy were concluded to originate from the same source; as the *dispendium* necessary to support the *fœtus in utero* in its minute state, and indeed in the first months of pregnancy, could not be all employed for that purpose:—hence,—bleeding was constantly prescribed,

BUT, on examination, we shall find this doctrine, specious as are its appearances,—apparently founded too on a solid basis,—and linked together, as it were, by a chain of rational deductions, to be, in most points, fallacious, and, in some, only partially elucidated;

as

as if the favourers of a *plethora* were afraid that a fair and full discussion of the whole should throw some doubt upon their system.

For the notion of a *plethora* has been clearly proved merely ideal; and BARON VAN SWIETEN, after incontestably confuting every argument brought in its support, thus forcibly concludes :

“ PRÆTEREA, si a *plethora* sensim ac-
 “ cumulata fluor menstruus penderet,
 “ deberet necessario retardari perio-
 “ dus; si quâcunque evacuatione mi-
 “ nueretur humorum quantitas, vel
 “ rerum penuriâ aut strictiori diætâ
 “ impediretur hæc accumulatio. Au-
 “ dacter provocat SIMPSON ad testimo-
 “ nium omnium medicorum, qui in
 “ praxi versati sunt; an unquam obser-
 “ vaverint retardari periodum per mis-
 “ sionem

“ fionem sanguinis, intermedio tem-
 “ pore institutam.

“ CERTUM est, quod venæ sectiones
 “ in morbis factæ, vel, & in fanis mu-
 “ lieribus, quæ quotannis sanguinis
 “ missionibus assueverant, rarò mu-
 “ tant solitam periodum, imò & ali-
 “ quando accelerent eandem, quod
 “ aliquoties vidi.”

FROM DR. CULLEN we have something
 similar :—

“ THERE is, certainly, something
 “ originally in females that deter-
 “ mines that evacuation (menstrual) to
 “ monthly periods. Constant repe-
 “ tition comes to fix it, independent
 “ of strong causes, either favouring,
 “ or preventing repletion. Bleeding
 “ will not impede it, nor filling the
 “ body

“ body produce it ; and, indeed, so
 “ much is this evacuation connected
 “ with periodical motions, that it is
 “ little in our power to produce any
 “ effect by medicines, but at those par-
 “ ticular times. Thus, if we would
 “ relax the uterine system, and bring
 “ back the evacuation when sup-
 “ pressed, our attempts would be in
 “ vain and fruitless, unless given at
 “ that time when the *menfes* should
 “ have returned*.”

FROM hence it appears, that no *ple-
 thora* exists in order to produce this
 flux.

IT may however be advanced, that
 though no *plethora* did at first exist,

* Lectures on the Materia Medica, page 31.

yet still by the usual discharge being suppressed, a greater quantity of blood will be collected than the constitution can bear with ease; and, as the infant cannot, at first, destroy it, an overfulness will be occasioned, which will call for bleeding, especially in the first months of pregnancy.

Was twenty-four ounces discharged, as has been asserted by FRIEND, and his followers, at every periodical menstruation, there might be great reason for the supposition; but, I believe, seldom half the quantity is known.

SOME will have the flux from eight to sixteen;—others have six, or eight, as the general quantity;—others, that it rarely exceeds four ounces;—and, indeed, from the most exact experiments

ments that could be made, it has appeared very different in different women—three—four—five—in some few eight, very seldom ten, ounces have been evacuated;—and also, in the same women, the *menstrua* have varied in quantity at different periods.

TAKING then the whole of these accounts together, we may, I think, fairly estimate the quantity from three to six ounces, or thereabouts. Some women I have known, who scarcely ever passed so much as the first, before they were pregnant; nor, after their first child, ever much exceeded it.

ALTHOUGH it may be advanced, the *fœtus in utero*, in its first rudiments, can consume but a very small portion of

what is retained, still we are to consider the increase of the *uterus*, as it loses not its thickness, from the first moment of impregnation, to the last of pregnancy; and, also, that the *ligamenta rotunda* are a series of vessels, which are distended during gestation; we shall find, that they require a necessary supply to preserve them in that state, and that that supply cannot be inconsiderable, if we recollect the difference of the size at each period. As the woman advances in pregnancy the *uterus* gradually increases, the *fœtus* requires more nourishment, hence the necessity of more and more blood, not only to promote these purposes, but also to give an additional warmth, which contributes not a little to the increase and strength of the embryo.

To

To the foregoing considerations may be added another, which deserves due attention, viz. that the symptoms which generally arise from pregnancy, such as *nausea*, sickness, want of appetite, vomiting, will assist in preventing too great an accumulation; as the quantity of food usually taken will be lessened, part of the *res ingesta* ejected from the stomach, and the digestive powers, in some degree, weakened.

FROM the arguments here advanced, it appears, that there is a sufficient provision made for the consumption of the obstructed fluids, by the necessary supply required; as well as a preventive cause of their too large accumulation, seeing that no *plethora* previously existed in the constitution; and, if we consider the time of women's

men's falling with child, which is generally immediately, or very soon after the flux of the *catamenia*, the too universally received doctrine must fall to the ground; for the symptoms arising from pregnancy, supposing a *plethora* the cause, would not immediately follow, but must take place at the time when the succeeding periodical evacuation should have come on; which daily experience convinces us is not the case,

STILL, notwithstanding the idea of a *plethora* being the cause of the menstrual flux, in every light, appears erroneous;—yet, if we consider the abilities of those men who first broached this matter;—the high estimation they were deservedly held in by the majority of mankind, who paid the greatest
defe-

deference to their opinions;—how strenuously they were labouring to build their theories upon, and deduce their arguments from, the laws of hydraulics, not averse to pass by any phenomena which contradicted their favourite system;—how plausible, at first sight, their reasoning appeared;—how well calculated to serve the purposes of the indolent and ignorant;—we shall cease to wonder that the practice of general bleeding became so universal in pregnancy. A *plethora* being the allowed cause,—depletion was the certain cure;—a consequence that must naturally follow.

THE simplicity of the idea conveyed by this term, made men, even of the weakest capacities, fancy they conceived it rightly, and perfectly understood

stood it in its fullest extent, unconscious of any other consequences than what manifested themselves at the moment present, and incapable of retracing those which happened at a more distant period, to their true source. Add to this, the remedy was in the hands of every smatterer in the medical world; and so perpetually practised on every slight and trivial occasion, that few objected to the operation, though advised by ignorant and rash pretenders.

NOR, if any bad consequence arose, was the judgment of the prescriber called in question; the error was never attributed to its proper origin, but generally to something more latent, and often incomprehensible.

It

It is not then at all surprising that this practice should be so powerfully prevalent, and so universally extended at that time; but at present it is rather extraordinary that it is not laid under more severe restrictions, since it has been proved, an overfulness of blood is not the cause of the menstrual flux; the symptoms arising from pregnancy cannot be attributed to its sudden suppression, consequently, depletion, in general, is not necessary.

—VAN SWIETEN declares:

“ Non est tantum inutilis sed noxia.”

In proof of this, it will be necessary for us to consider,—

WHAT effect general bleeding has upon the constitution.—

How those effects are applicable to gravid women.—

F

AND

AND, what mischief may be produced by the indiscriminate use of the lancet.

BLOOD-LETTING lessens the quantity of the circulating fluids; and, where neither a *plethora*, nor increased *momentum* of the blood prevails, weakens the tone of the vascular system,—diminishes the force of the blood through the machine in general, and also the quantity of fluids separated by the different secretory organs of the body,—by which the blood is rendered thinner,—the solids relaxed,—the secretion of the nervous fluid less copious. Hence, if carried too great a length,—the humours will become thin and acrid,—the habit * cachectical and drop-
fical

* Humores nostri suas dotes accipiunt per vim vasorum & viscerum—hæc ergo si sint
nimis

fical,—the equable action of the nervous power will be disturbed and irregular,—the system rendered too irritable, and the whole *vires vitæ* greatly and irreparably injured.

If we consider the good effects produced by bleeding, I mean general bleeding, we see they are only calculated to remove those symptoms arising from too great a plenitude in this case; but as it has been proved, that the distressing consequences of gravity do not originate from that source, it seems not at all necessary to have recourse to it. Nevertheless, it may be useful in such constitutions as are disposed to breed too much blood, and

nimis debilia, necessario degenerant humores.
Comment. in Boer. Aph. §. 44.

may, from that peculiarity, have the common symptoms of pregnancy aggravated; and from thence, a train of others not depending on gravidity as an immediate cause.

IT may also be necessary in such people as have accustomed themselves to bleed at different times every year, though not pregnant; but even here the necessity arises from a temporary *plethora*.

DR. CULLEN has given his opinion to this effect, (viz.)

“ BLOOD-LETTING has a manifest tendency to increase the quantity of blood; and, if this evacuation be repeated at stated times, such symptoms of repletion, and such motions
“ are

“ are excited at these times as render
 “ the operation necessary *.”

HENCE, then, the whole good we can derive, in the first months of pregnancy, from bleeding is obvious; as well as the particular circumstances which make it requisite; and here, there is no doubt but it will be of infinite use. It is to be lamented, that it has not been, nor is at present confined, so much as it ought, to this particular point; for there is scarce a pregnant woman, however delicate her constitution, but undergoes this operation, and that repeatedly during the course of pregnancy: and I believe that the health of many has fallen a sacrifice to this too general custom.

* Lectures on the Materia Medica, p. 31.

FOR the effect of bleeding, to those of relaxed habits, thin state of fluids, and irritable systems, must of necessity increase every constitutional imperfection,—occasion mischief during the time of gestation,—danger in labor, by diminishing the strength which is already too feeble,—and very often close the scene with death; at least induce a number of tedious and incurable diseases.

As life itself depends upon the circulation of the blood, and health upon its proper quantity and consistence; with such a tone of the solids, and regular exertion of the nervous power, as may be able to convert the *res ingesta* into sound juices, and properly prepare it for every necessary secretion;
 so

so whatever tends improperly to diminish the one,—destroy the other,—weaken the third,—or interrupt the last,—must, of course, be productive of a variety of complaints even in unimpregnated women, much more so in those who are pregnant.

Now bleeding produces all these effects, if carried beyond due bounds, even in the most robust constitutions; and therefore injudiciously administered, will, no doubt, be attended with mischievous and very often fatal consequences. I have several times known it produce abortion; particularly in a lady, whom I afterwards attended.—The case appears to me so conclusive, that a recital of the whole may not here be improper.—

SHE

SHE was about twenty-three years old when married, of a very delicate constitution, and highly nervous,—possessed of such sensibility, and exquisite feeling, that even a melancholy tale of affliction, would occasion strong spasms both in the lungs, stomach, and kidneys; as I have seen manifested by a short breathing, sickness, vomiting, and from large quantities of very pale urine.—From the suddenness of the attack, and the time of its coming on, the cause was certainly ascertained, whichever of the affections she laboured under.

SHE soon became with child, and was much oppressed with a number of uneasy symptoms, particularly vomiting, and sudden partial head-achs,
though

though not of long continuance.—
This was the case three times before I
saw her; she was always bled, and al-
ways miscarried.

THE parents, so often disappointed
of what they most earnestly wished for,
were unhappy; and being told by her
surgeon, a gentleman who had been
long in the practice, that she had al-
ways made her application too late
for his advice; on the first suspicion of
a similar situation, she was determined
to send immediately:—he being called
into the country on business, and not
returning so soon as was expected, I
was applied to.

I FOUND every thing prepared for the
old practice, as it was fully expected I
should order it.—But upon conversing
G with

with the lady some time, bleeding appeared to me highly improper, as her constitution seemed not able to bear any evacuation of that sort.—Venesection being so general on these occasions, added to her thoughts of miscarriage before, on account of her not being bled earlier, it was with some difficulty I could persuade her to defer the operation.—However she at last consented strictly to adhere to the rules which should be laid down to her.

I FIRST endeavoured to relieve her mind from those anxieties which constantly molested her,—and to dissipate her fears, by such assurances as practice warranted. This I looked upon as essential to her well-doing.—She was conducted through in the following manner.

HER

HER food was all of the light kind, and such as is most easily digested;—a glass or two of Port was allowed her at dinner. When troubled with flight pains, as she sometimes was in her back, she was ordered to lie down on a couch till they went off.—She had no regular fixed times for refreshment; but was desired to eat whenever she thought she could best relish her food, and of such things as she fancied she best liked; avoiding every thing that was not perfectly agreeable to her.

DRAUGHTS, with the *julapium e camphorâ*, sometimes with liquid *laudanum*, were prescribed occasionally.—Wine was her general cordial; and once every day she took of HUXHAM's tincture of bark two drams in a glass of

Madeira.—Care was taken, at the same time, to have her body kept gently open with small doses of rhubarb ; and now and then, by way of change, with *Ol: Ricini* made into an emulsion,

So agreeable was camphire to her nervous system, that smelling to it generally took off those sudden headaches with which she was repeatedly attacked.

GENTLE exercise I advised daily on foot.—She never was permitted once to ride in a carriage, nor on horseback, during her pregnancy ;—not only on account of the jolting motion, but for fear of any accident happening to alarm or frighten her.

By these means, at the end of eight months, according to her own reckoning, she was brought to bed of a healthful, stout, plump girl, though, from every appearance, I judged it was at its full time.

I AM almost fully persuaded, that her former miscarriages may truly be attributed to bleeding, as they always happened the day succeeding the operation : add to this, she never was bled for any complaint before marriage, to the quantity even of four ounces, but there always appeared a flow of blood through the *vagina*.

By adhering to this mode of management, which she ever afterwards, when with child, voluntarily pursued, and herself directed, except under such
cir-

circumstances where medicine was necessary, she was fortunate enough to be blessed with three children at their full time, healthful and strong;—and she has confessed to me, that she always recovered more expeditiously, and more perfectly after every lying-in, than after any one of her miscarriages, though they generally happened about the third or fourth month. The advantage here accruing may be easily accounted for. There was no loss of blood that could be possibly avoided; and, during her pregnant state, every step was taken to support the *vis vitæ*.

I SHOULD have observed, that in my directions to her husband and attendants, I laid great stress upon her being kept perfectly quiet, unmolested by any disagreeable stories, which
might

might make too strong impressions, or ruffle her temper:—and I dare say, their strict observance did, in no small degree, contribute to our success:—for I know of nothing, though to many it may appear trivial, so conducive to a woman's welfare in this situation as cheerful company, and a mind at ease*.

If the circumstances above recited are not sufficient of themselves to prove the danger attending injudicious bleeding, let us more minutely examine what mischiefs that operation is capable of producing, and we shall find they are quite adequate to the conse-

* *Maxime omnium vero tranquillus animus, & nullis adfectuum fluctibus agitated rectæ mentis—& corporis valetudini plurimum prodest.* Hoffm. de Sanit. Corp. tuend. Supplem.

quences which ensued from it in this instance, and many others which may be nearly, though not exactly similar.

LET us first inquire what were the proper indications in this case?

By no means to debilitate the patient by improper evacuations, but to endeavour to abate the irritability of the system,—to increase the tone of the vessels,—to improve the crasis of the blood, and support every department of the digestive powers; that the constitution might be strengthened, and enabled to afford sufficient nourishment to the *fœtus in utero*.

Now general bleeding produces, in the human machine, effects diametrically opposite to these indications:

nor

nor do we know of any thing which has so sudden, so powerful, and so lasting an effect.—BARON VAN SWIETEN says,

“ Dum in aquosam tenuitatem incipit degenerare sanguis, perit omne robur.”—A little after—

“ Ubi ergo nimium robur in vasis & visceribus peccat, depletis per venæ sectionem vasis, &eductâ densissimâ parte sanguinis ingeruntur aquosa.”—

And presently, “ Omnia ingesta alimenta & potulenta sanguine sunt leviora, vis ergo vasorum hæc continuatâ actione compingit & consolidat in bonum sanguinem*.”

BUT a proper tension of the vascular and solid system is necessary, to

* Comment. in Boerh. Aphorif. §. 54.

preserve a continued action on their contents to produce these purposes ; —which tension, depends upon the equable exertion of the nervous power, and a healthful crasis of the circulating fluids.

For if the blood itself is not of proper density, the capacity of the vessels will not be sufficiently increased : hence their force will be diminished, inasmuch as their re-action is always in proportion to the quantity of matter acting upon them ; which is stronger or weaker according to their state of distensibility ; provided the acting cause is not pushed so far as to hurt, or destroy their elastic power.

Now the quantity of matter is more or less in proportion to its specific gravity,

gravity, which depends entirely on the greatest number of particles collected in a given space*:—and the force of their attraction *inter se*; which will be more forcible by the points of contact being increased in each particular, and this may be effected by compression†.

IF, therefore, the crasis of the blood is rendered less dense, the specific gravity will be decreased; the quantity of matter will be less; the re-action of the vessels must be weaker; conse-

* *Densum enim vocamus sanguinem quando est maximi ponderis in data mensura; hoc autem pendet a pressione vaforum.* Comment. in Boerh. Aph. §. 48.

† *Dum nituntur minuere fibræ capacitatem vasis, quod constituunt, liquida contenta premunt, compingunt, mutant.* Comment. in Boerh. Aph. §. 26.

quently, the attraction of the particles, *inter se*, will abate of their power, by their points of contact being decreased, inasmuch as the pressure is lessened.

FROM hence, then, it is indisputably conclusive, that less blood will be returned to the heart in any given time in its diastole; the distension of its ventricles will be less:—In its systole the contractile power will be often exerted, though weaker;—less quantity, in the same period, will be thrown to different parts of the machine;—the *encephalon* will not be sufficiently supplied to enable it to separate a due proportion of that “subtile, elastic
“fluid, the material vital principle
“of animals;” hence the nervous system

tem will be weakened, and, of consequence, every action depending on its influence.

OF course then the whole machine will be debilitated; the digestive powers will be defective:—hence chyle, not properly prepared, will be thrown into the constitution;—the nutritious juices, which ought to have been duly assimilated, will not partake, so much as they ought, of the nature of sound fluids, which are essentially necessary to nutriment; and supply those parts which are unavoidably destroyed by attrition, and the natural actions of life.

ON these accounts the *vires vitæ* must fall below their healthful standard;—a relaxation of the solids will ensue.

THE

THE adhesion of the *placenta* and *secundines* to the *uterus* will become too weak ;—there will be a defect of proper nourishment to the *fœtus* ;—from a deficiency of good blood the *uterus* will become loose in its texture :—from all these circumstances, what consequence can be so naturally expected as abortion ?

ON carefully reviewing the matter, we shall be convinced *too copious bleeding* is amongst the number of causes, and one of the first class, calculated to produce these evils ; for they all may be occasioned by rendering the blood too fluid.

IN a constitution similar to that we have before specified, where we find the predisposing causes of abortion so manifest,

manifest, is it not madness to prescribe that remedy which, by persevering in, would create the very same mischief in those more healthful and robust?—It must certainly, therefore, in one so debilitated, have a very unhappy, and rapid effect, in increasing them *ad ultimum*:—"For all sudden and occasional changes in debility or strength, contractility or flaccidity are more probably referred to the state of the moving fibres, under the influence of the nervous power.—*Quam facile mille res turbant* *."

THE ejaculation to GALEN, on another occasion, with a slight alteration, seems not a little applicable to the man who persists in so dangerous a practice:—

O homo! jugulasti Fœtum.

* Lectures on the Materia Medica, p. 8.

INDEED,

INDEED, this event does not only happen by bringing on those effects already enumerated, but also by rendering the humours of the mother too acrimonious.---For bleeding diminishes the secretions in different parts of the the body, particularly the *materia perspirabilis*, which should pass through the vessels appropriated to that purpose continually, in order to throw off what is useless, and may be hurtful to the constitution, if retained, by corrupting the rest of the humours, and rendering them also acrid.

Now the *fœtus* being nourished by those juices, separated from the general mass of blood of the mother, they must partake of the nature of that fluid from whence they are derived;—for we know children have been born with the seeds of the *lues venerea*;
 which

which has made its appearance before they have received any nourishment from the breast of the mother.—Nay more,—children will be affected by particular matter circulating in the fluids of the mother, though itself incapable of making any sensible alteration in them, or affecting her at all:—witness those which have been born with the small-pox upon them.

IF then, by any means, the humours of the mother are rendered acrimonious, mischievous effects may be conveyed to the embryo; which, as it is susceptible of many complaints—may experience, from its tender and delicate state, the most fatal consequences:—and probably the hydrocephalus,—the variety of eruptive complaints,—

I

apthæ,

apthæ,—and weakly constitutions do arise from this cause.

NOR will the effect of this mal-practice be confined to the *fœtus* alone, the constitution of the mother, I am persuaded, materially suffers:—as by this means,—flow fevers, hectic heats, nervous coughs, spasms, hystERIC affections, and all those disorders which owe their origin to a debilitated state of the system, and corruption of the humours, may, and do much oftener arise from this practice than is generally allowed.

DR. WHYTT says:——“ A third general occasional cause of nervous disorders may be,—the want of a sufficient quantity of blood, or of blood
“ of

“ of a proper density ; and as the
 “ strength and firmness of the whole
 “ body depend upon proper fluids,
 “ and a due quantity of them, may
 “ not very irregular and strange dis-
 “ orders happen from a want of blood,
 “ or too watery a state of it ; especially
 “ in those whose nervous system is
 “ very delicate and easily affected ?—
 “ For when there does not remain in
 “ the vessels, a quantity of blood suffi-
 “ cient for the carrying on the several
 “ functions in a proper manner, the
 “ regular circulation of all the fluids
 “ must be disturbed, and the distribu-
 “ tion, or exertion of the nervous
 “ moving power will be irregular : but
 “ whatever way great loss of blood
 “ may give rise to nervous diseases,
 “ we are certain of the fact.”—

IF then, therefore, women are liable to a variety of complaints by these means, abortion will add to the calamity. Hence every thing which is in the least apparently productive of that pernicious event, amongst which we find injudicious bleeding, ought most religiously to be avoided,

NOR do the evil consequences of depletion, in constitutions not plethoric, extend only to this first stage ; so I call that from the time of impregnation, to the time that labor comes on ;—but they are felt in the second very materially, and too often fatally in the last, after delivery.

IN the time of labor, women, in many cases, stand in need of the most amazing

ing strength, in order to enable them to lay down their load with safety.

THE contractile force of all the instruments, necessary to the expulsion of the *fœtus*, with every other effort, which Nature can make for her relief, are very often excessive; so great as almost to exceed all conception; when the head of the *fœtus* is large, or too much ossified, and the *pelvis*, though of common dimensions with respect to the size of the woman, not sufficiently spacious to admit a free passage to it in natural labors; or, when the *os tinæ* is too rigid in the first labor of those who are rather advanced in years.—“ In primiparis enim, robustis, & ætate provectis, os uteri quandoque ad extremum, usque occlusum

“ *sum manet, nec aperitur nisi pro-*
 “ *pellentibus doloribus* *.”

EVERY thing, therefore, which weakens the system in general, will also weaken the contractile force of the *uterus*, and abdominal muscles: hence, even in cases wherever the common efforts of nature are only required; the labor will be tedious; but where there is more than common resistance to overcome, it will be at best very difficult, and too frequently dangerous.

THE reasons why too copious bleeding has in its consequences these effects, are very obvious; for by that the action of nervous power is irregular and weak, consequently, the pains of labor will be short, and of little

* Com. in Boerh. Aph. §. 1315.

force;

force;—the progressive motion of the *fœtus* will be tardy,—the dilatation of the *os tinæ* slowly accomplished, more particularly if the head of the *fœtus* falls down, which I have often observed, before the waters.

BUT still greater force will be necessary in order to protrude the head through the bones of the *pelvis*, which is effected by its being elongated from the different partitions of the head being pressed on each other at those places, which, in the adult state, are joined by futures.—This requires greater or less force in proportion to the size of the head, the diameter of the *pelvis*, and the ossified state of the bones of the skull.

Now, should it so happen that one of these causes should exist in a *preternatural*

natural state, a more than common exertion of the propulsive powers must be applied to overcome the difficulty, which only can be effected by the *vires vitæ* being maintained in a vigorous condition ;—if, otherwise, the knowledge and assistance of the accoucheur is required, who may supply those defects, which, in these cases, are rarely accomplished without instruments,—and then always attended with increase of pain and danger.

As it is impossible, before the time of labor, to know whether these difficulties will arise or not, how careful ought we to be to preserve the power of Nature; not even run the risk of taking away the smallest portion? Though some have advanced that small quantities of blood being drawn cannot
be

be prejudicial, therefore constantly practice it; yet, in some constitutions, it may be highly detrimental; for those, already too weak, feel very severely the slightest evacuation, and have the effects already enumerated more than proportionably increased; inasmuch as they are incapable of recovering any error which co-operates, in the smallest degree, with natural defects. The loss of a few ounces of blood by some constitutions, though improper, may not be perceptibly felt immediately; yet, if that should occasion any debility at the time that strength is required, what can supply it? Why, therefore, run the hazard, especially when still greater dangers may present themselves, which will require more than common strength to conquer?

K

FOR

FOR should an uterine hemorrhage come on, which is sometimes the case, how much must the danger be increased by a previous, unnecessary use of venesection?

STILL further, should this happen before the *os tinæ* is sufficiently dilated for the operator to proceed to immediate delivery, and this flux of blood be occasioned by some part of the *placenta* being separated from the *uterus*, inevitable death will be the consequence.

AND, in all probability, imprudent bleeding may not only be the cause of the mischief itself, but the very reason why the patient falls a victim, as the operator is not supplied with any opportunity of successful assistance.

FOR

FOR the *vires vitæ* being weakened by this injudicious treatment, the *uterus* has not power to contract itself sufficiently either to decrease the diameter of its vessels, or to dilate the *os tincae* as quickly as necessity demands ; neither of which might have been the case, had proper regard been paid to them during pregnancy.—At least, it must be allowed, every species of danger will be increased.

THOUGH practice will supply us with cases where women have recovered after the most severe floodings, still we find, even the most robust have been reduced to such a state of weakness, as scarce ever to have their strength restored ; but been, all their lives afterwards, subject to complaints arising from weakened *flamina*,

IN cases where there has been too liberal an effusion of blood, I mean artificially, as well as naturally, the patients have remained a long time weak and languid; I have sometimes known them four, or five months before they could positively say their health was perfectly re-established.—In general, they get their milk either with difficulty, or not at all; and when acquired, it is so ferous and acrid as not to be fit for any purpose of nutrition.

THEIR after-pains are mostly severe, —the *lochia* highly offensive, towards the latter end,—their legs swell,—their whole body becomes anasarcaous, eruptions of different kinds appear all over the surface of the skin.—They are often seized with puerperal (too commonly

monly mistaken for the milk) fever;—
and also irritating coughs, which, if
the weakness brought on should be
excessive, terminate in consumptions.

——“ Sed dum debilitata solida non
“ possunt propellere distendentia flui-
“ da, fit stagnatio, & in calore aeris
“ communis omnia liquida humana,
“ (si fortè pingua exciperis) sibi relicta
“ putrescunt solo lacte excepto, (quod
“ nondum dotes omnes humani liquidi
“ acquisivit), hinc longè plus in calore
“ corporis nostri, qui semper aeris com-
“ munis calorem superat *.”

FROM this cause also, a bearing down,
and protrusion of the *uterus* is some-
times occasioned, owing to the suspen-
sory ligaments not being capable of
properly contracting themselves.

* Comment. in Boerh. Aph. §. 26.

IN

IN fine, women by these means are rendered liable to every species of chronic disorders, which owe their origin to too weak a state of the solids, and too acrimonious fluids.

FROM what has been advanced above, it will clearly appear that the greatest mischiefs may, and do very often arise from an imprudent use of the lancet; I will venture to assert, that, in weakly constitutions, some one or more of the complaints enumerated in the foregoing pages, always attend those who have been the improper objects of this practice.

IT is much to be lamented that a remedy, when applied with judgment, so beneficial, should be made so detrimental to mankind; and that the most elegant

elegant and delicate part of the creation, who should command every office of attention and humanity, should have their pains multiplied, and their miseries increased by the hand they expect should relieve them.

AS BLEEDING is so general a practice, that people have recourse to it repeatedly on every trivial occasion, nay, very often without any occasion at all, and do not experience any material inconvenience ; it may be thought that the mischiefs from thence accruing, if they happen, can seldom be of so dangerous a nature.

I WOULD have such consider, that if it is possible for them ever to happen at all ; or, if bleeding has but the slightest bad effect upon the constitution,

tion,—it is the indispensable duty of every practitioner to obviate it.—For very often by preventing, or removing what at first may appear of very trifling consequence, greater danger is avoided.—He should endeavour to investigate the minutest cause, to ascertain its most distant dangerous consequence that can possibly happen ;—for no man can say it shall not occur ;—in the course of his practice never lose sight of it ; but labor incessantly to prevent it,—which will certainly be performed much sooner in the first period of that state tending towards it, than the last.

MEN who make the medical art subservient *only* to their interest, may, by inattention, wanton away the healths of their patients ; but those who view it also, as they ought, as a conscientious duty,

duty, will ever be careful, and anxiously solicitous to correct the smallest error, happy in relieving the most trivial distresses of their fellow-creatures.

BEFORE I take leave of my subject permit to observe,—That too great a caution cannot be used respecting this operation, as according to the propriety or impropriety of its application, it may have the most salutary, or noxious tendency.

So conscious of the use, and so certain of the abuse of this remedy was the learned and laborious VAN SWIETEN, that he has given us a general rule in order to distinguish when it is necessary, to which if we add that of SIR RICHARD MANNINGHAM, and care-

L

fully

fully observe them, then we may be the fortunate instruments of success to our patients, and happiness to ourselves, by preserving them from much misery and danger:—

“ Si enim langueat pallida mulier gr-
 “ vida, a sanguinis missione abstineret
 “ omninò ; contra si rubescat, caleat,
 “ venæ turgeant, caput doleat, narum
 “ stillicidium adfit, tensionem circa
 “ lumbos, pelvim, inguina sentiat,
 “ venam secaret.”

BUT as it is probable some circumstances may arise to render the point doubtful, MANNINGHAM lays down the following mode, which he says never deceived him.—

“ Quandocunque sanguinem mitti ius-
 “ seris in *rebus* præsertim *dubiis*,—digito
 “ ægrotantis venæ continuò ab incisâ
 “ venâ

“ venâ admoto observandum fortiores
“ an languidiores, effluente sanguine,
“ fiant ictus; idque ex solâ unciâ per-
“ missâ observatione sedulâ dignosca-
“ tur;—si fortiores fiant ictus tutò
“ potes pergere: sin minus, vel si lan-
“ guidiores fiunt, incommodis afficie-
“ tur maximis ægrotans, nisi statim
“ definatur *.”

* Aphor. Med. fol. 203.

T H E E N D.



